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ABSTRACT

This bulletin considers recent developments in employment training, especially with regard to Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) in Great Britain. These developments include the freedom of each TEC to choose the training schemes it wants to offer, TEC self-direction, changes in funding for job training, and the addition of other unemployed groups to those now eligible for training. It also discusses quality issues, such as the requirement that all organizations involved in training must achieve approved status from the Training Agency through its system of Reports on Training Arrangements (ROTA). Criteria for ROTA are listed. Four case studies, collected in March-April 1990, show how colleges of further education are responding to employment training. The bulletin then addresses how training has been used to effect change in colleges, particularly with regard to development of the curriculum, institution, and staff. These changes are discussed: flexible learning, equal opportunities, guidance, staffing, staff development, standards, stages, and implementation. Some insights into future developments are drawn. (YLB)

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BULLETIN NUMBER 3

EMPLOYMENT TRAINING

OCTOBER 1990

This is the third in the FEU's series of bulletins on Employment Training (ET). It considers some of the recent developments in ET, especially with regard to Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs). It also provides a group of case studies, collected in March-April 1990, which show how FE colleges are responding to ET.

Eighty per cent of colleges are now involved in ET, mainly as Training Managers or providers of Directed Training with a few also acting as Training Agents. Some colleges are actively supported by their LEA which may provide financial support, premises or staff to a greater or lesser extent as shown in the case studies.

The studies highlight some of the ways in which FE colleges are responding to local needs - not just of ET clients but also of employers. They also show how ET has been used to effect change in colleges, particularly with regard to the development of the curriculum, the institution and the staff.

This bulletin will be the last to concentrate exclusively on ET. With the advent of TECs, the Department of Employment has devolved its responsibility for both the training framework and the management of funds to the TECs and away from the Training Agency (TA) area offices. The TECs will work in collaboration with the TA regional offices to provide more locally determined training programmes of which ET will be a part. This bulletin outlines the changes and considers some of the implications.

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TRAINING AND ENTERPRISE COUNCILS AND ET

New developments

- Each TEC will be free to decide what sort of training schemes it wants to offer, including the form ET will take in its own area. It will decide on which Training Occupational Classification (TOC) will be needed in its locality, when and where it should take

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place, who should deliver it and how much they will be paid to deliver it.

- ET will no longer be directed from the Training Agency head office, which will now provide only basic guidelines rather than the detailed regulations to which schemes had previously to adhere. There will be no centrally imposed or designed training framework; TECs will agree their programmes, when they set these out in their Business Plans, with Training Agency regional directors.
- Quality control systems will be the responsibility of the TEC with the TA regional director's approval. However, TA area office staff will be under contract to the TECs and are likely to be used in their existing monitoring capacity.
- With the change from nationally to locally determined provision it is particularly relevant to consider the case studies provided in this bulletin. They are interesting because the LEAs and colleges are using their ET programmes to meet local needs in a variety of ways. The case studies therefore offer potential models of the kinds of provision which TECs will want to encourage.

CHANGES IN FUNDING FOR ET

The main issues

- Each TEC will have a budget agreed with the TA regional director, of which up to 90% will be for trainee weeks delivered and a minimum of 10% for outputs achieved (trainees who have progressed into a job, self-employment, further education or other training).
- TECs will be paid a single rate of funding for ET which will cover amounts previously paid by the TA for basic and supplementary grants as well as for childcare, travel, tools and equipment to each Training Manager. Each TEC will determine how to allocate these funds.
- TECs may be paid bonuses, not just for achieving output but for success in helping priority groups - ethnic minorities, the disabled, inner-city residents.
- Other unemployed groups now eligible for ET are:
  - — those with disabilities or long-term health problems
  - — those needing training in literacy and/or numeracy
  - — those needing help with the English language
  - — lone parents

These are in addition to the major ET client group of 18-59-year-olds who have been unemployed for six months or more.

- Up to 15% of the national budget will be available to cater for non-mainstream groups:
  - — returners to the labour market
  - — unemployed people going into skill shortage occupational areas or wanting enterprise training
  - — victims of large-scale redundancies

In certain parts of the country where unemployment is low, schemes have been encouraged to attract large numbers of returners or skill shortage clients in order to keep recruitment high. Where schemes are now dependent on the above groups, there will be room for TECs to negotiate on this figure of 15% to meet the required client mix and training needs in their area and to allocate appropriate funding to individual providers.

QUALITY ISSUES

All organisations involved in Employment Training will have to achieve approved status from the Training Agency through its system of Reports on Training Arrangements (ROTA). This is a two-year process with the first Approved Training Organisations (ATOs) due in September 1990. If TECs take over before this process is complete, they will be responsible for its completion and for arrangements for new providers. TECs can then continue with the existing ATO criteria or devise their own equivalent which must be approved by the TA regional director.

ROTA

- All TAs and TMs must satisfy nine criteria which show that they are capable of providing a quality ET programme.
- Training Agency staff monitor the programmes over an agreed period, looking for evidence that the criteria are being met.
- Criteria 1-5 have now been monitored and reports produced under stage 1 of ROTA. Activities under criteria 6-9 are currently being monitored under stage 2.

Criteria for ROTA

1. Staff policies and practices
2. Premises and equipment
3. Equal opportunities policy
4. Health and safety policy
5. Financial viability
6. Managing action plans
7. Designing and arranging training programmes
8. Effective programme review
9. Assignment, recording of progress, and achievement and use of vocational qualifications

Performance indicators such as:

- number of scheme places filled;
- length of stay of participants;
- destinations of leavers;
- number of participants achieving vocational qualifications, especially NVQs;

will be used to monitor individual schemes but some will also be used to determine levels of funding.

However, none of these performance indicators relates to the quality of the programme being offered and they do not necessarily reflect issues such as:

- the quality of the training environment
- the sort of equipment and materials to which trainees have access
- the amount and quality of guidance offered
- the type of work placements provided

The TECs will need to ensure that these issues are considered when they recontract with providers of ET programmes.

CASE STUDY 1. WEST YORKSHIRE

Airedale and Wharfedale College

Contact John Briggs, Principal 0532 531723

Leeds City Council Education Authority

Contact Paul Forbes 0532 463963

Leeds City Council offers an integrated adult and youth training programme. As a Training Manager it carries out much of its directed training at community-based Training Bases, using staff from the LEA colleges to deliver the training as well as providing community-based projects. All the training, development, and capital costs incurred in setting up the schemes either at the bases or the colleges, have been covered by the City Council.

Trainees receive extra income of £10 per week on top of the benefit and married women receive a further £5 weekly in addition to the £10 allowance. There has also been help with bus fares and lunch expenses.

The scheme offers training in most TOC areas leading to National Vocational Qualifications as well as in information technology, literacy, numeracy and language support. In addition, two new community bases are being provided for members of ethnic minority groups, and courses at these, such as garment manufacture for women, are designed to meet local skill shortages and to meet the needs of this client group.

Airedale and Wharfedale College has benefited from Leeds City Council's positive involvement in ET. As well as clerical and IT training which are offered on a completely roll-on, roll-off basis for ET trainees, the college has been able to develop new courses in a number of areas. Some examples are:

Leisure

- Sport and Recreation (C&G certificate for Leisure and Recreation) attracts younger trainees, especially males.
- Library Assistants course (C&G certificate for Library Assistants, Level 3) attracts older trainees of both sexes.

Both are offered as modular rolling programmes. The college has used Leeds City Council staff to help with development teaching of the courses and many trainees gain employment with the council.

Agriculture

This attracts trainees of all ages and ability levels. A flexible modular course provides training in as wide a range of areas as possible to enhance employment prospects:

— Horticulture — Forestry
— Agriculture — Animal care

Trainees are entered for National Examinations Board for Agriculture, Horticulture and Allied Industries (NEBAHAI) National Proficiency Tests and also C&G Horticulture Skills which are not NVQs but which provide structure and motivation for trainees with a low skill base.

Trainees can opt for flexible learning programmes, choosing modules appropriate to their work experience; IT, work based learning and supported self-study are also part of the programme.

Access to higher education

- Science or Humanities, leading to courses at Trinity and All Saints College of HE in Leeds, attracts older trainees.

The course has a traditional intake in September and finishes in June but has been made more vocationally orientated for ET trainees and has a work experience placement during the summer period. ET trainees come from a local private training provider (BEST Training) which sub-contracts with the college for this element.

CASE STUDY 2. WEST MIDLANDS

Dudley College

Contact Nick Mayman 0384 455433

Dudley is one of three colleges providing training for Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council which is the Training Manager. The consortium of colleges is managed by a Director of Training based at Dudley College.

The colleges have a shared bank of work placements

and can exchange trainees easily between the three colleges. Having a consortium arrangement also means that there is more effective strategic planning for ET provision.

The programme offers training in most TOC areas with open-access Basic Skills provision, local work placements, which include Dudley MBC, and community-based projects.

Community-based projects

Work placements are provided in **construction**, **care of the elderly**, **leisure**, **horticulture** and **clerical** and **administrative** work.

This type of work experience is ideal for many participants who need a more sheltered work environment but, as there is no employers' financial contribution for trainees working on projects, the training is expensive to provide.

English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) provision

Special provision has been made for one particular group - older unskilled Asian men. ESOL materials such as workbooks and tapes related to specific occupations are being prepared and used with this group as part of a Training Agency-funded project because it was found that there were no vocationally specific materials available for this age group, many of whom need to train or retrain for skilled employment.

Customised training

Locally there is a demand from employers for employees to go into the areas of retailing, finance and administration. The West Midlands colleges also have experience of working with local employers, ET and other trainees to meet specific skill shortages in engineering and related industries.

Accreditation of prior learning

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) in three TOC areas (clerical, catering and plumbing) is the basis of a project which is now in its first phase with the second due to cover other TOC areas. The intention is to set up APL centres and produce APL resources which could include skill tests. Since TECs have responsibility for deciding how to implement initial assessment and action planning, this sort of initiative could appeal to them.

CASE STUDY 3. COUNTY DURHAM

Darlington College of Technology

Contact Liz Lloyd 0325 467651

The college acts as a Training Agent for the Darlington and Teesdale district and this is overseen by a consortium of local Training Managers. The college also runs a Restart programme and a Job Club which operate alongside the Training Agent in a self-contained unit.

Training provision

The college is also a Training Manager with over 100 places in a range of TOC areas. Much of the directed training is offered through infill onto existing day-release or full-time courses but some special ET provision is offered in IT and clerical training where greater capacity is needed.

A multi-skill workshop has been provided to deal with small numbers of trainees in certain occupational areas or those needing a more sheltered working environment, and trainees also use drop-in facilities for IT and literacy and numeracy.

The integration of ET trainees with YT and other students has led to a more rapid development of NVQs within mainstream college courses. This has been further accelerated by the increasing numbers of trainees (YT and ET) from outside Training Managers who sub-contract the college to deliver training leading to NVQs.

ROUTES Training Programme

This is a programme to meet the education and training needs of army wives at Catterick Garrison in North Yorkshire and has been set up by the college, the regional REPLAN staff and Army personnel.

The wives of servicemen often experience frequent moves, spells abroad and life in remote garrisons. ROUTES offers them a flexible open learning programme based on interests expressed by the women themselves. Currently it includes word processing, enterprise skills, caring and welfare, etc.

Through its ET scheme, the college has taken on as ET clients a small group who have gone on to start ET in caring occupations with directed training provided at the garrison by college staff, and work placements provided by the Army or local employers.

The Army has been very supportive of the whole programme, providing assistance in the form of equipment, accessible premises, administrative support and child care. It is considering adopting this model not only nationally but internationally to support the wives of service personnel in a constructive and worthwhile way.

CASE STUDY 4. CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Cambridge Regional College

Contact Mike Platten 0223 324357

At Cambridge Regional College (CRC) a single contract covers both the Training Manager for ET and

the YTS Managing Agent. Since there is now no Training Agent, the assessment function has been absorbed by this contractor, which operates as the Fulbourne Enterprise Centre (FEC).

Training provision for special needs

Since unemployment is low in this area, a large proportion of those within the target group for ET have special needs. Early experience showed that it would be difficult to generate sufficient work placements for such trainees.

Fulbourne Enterprise Centre

FEC, therefore, developed a strategy of working with a specialist charitable trust, the Rowan Foundation, which establishes businesses for special social purposes. Broadly, the trust aims to provide training and employment for those with special needs.

In addition, the college is licensing independent companies, some of them new, to operate on college premises. Their activities, working with the trust and offering accommodation to appropriate companies, have a number of valuable spin-offs. They generate placements, provide income and extend the college's experience of working in the area of special needs. It is also hoped that this partnership with local companies will lead to strong influence over the new Training and Enterprise Council and a recognition of the importance of special needs work. FEC is also, as a natural development of these activities, developing a function as an employment agency for local councils and the Richmond Fellowship.

Other initiatives at CRC

These include workshops offering services such as faxing, photocopying and typing on a commercial basis, with opportunities for trainees not only to be involved in productive activity but also in its management. Funding has been sought from the TA for a Local Quality Initiative which will provide financial resources for research into ET and mental health.

Assessment is also to be offered on a commercial basis to local industry and there is evidence that this will be a successful enterprise.

A Youth Development Project will look at quality assessment and will be investigating issues relating to the continuity and consistency between schools' records of achievement, personal action plans and the National Record of Vocational Achievement. Obviously, this might yield interesting information not only about continuity of records of achievement but also about the compatibility of schools' attainment targets and competence-related vocational qualifications.

CURRICULUM AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Flexible learning

ET has forced colleges to become more flexible in both the curriculum offered and in its delivery. The colleges interviewed for this bulletin are responding in some or all of the following ways:

- year-round provision
- part-time roll-on, roll-off ET provision
- infilling onto full-time or day-release courses
- combining groups of learners such as ET, YT, day-release or unemployed, to form viable groups
- multi-skill workshops
- drop-in open-access workshops - especially IT and Basic Skills
- supported self-study
- assessment on demand
- modularised provision
- National Vocational Qualifications
- practical project-based training
- guidance and support throughout the programmes

These flexible patterns of study are more obvious where a college is also a Training Manager (TM) but do occur within the directed training offered to other TMs.

Colleges should be taking the opportunity to market their ability to supply flexible training to other TMs in their locality as the latter may not be able to offer the training, and especially the NVQs, which must be offered to ET clients.

Equal opportunities

ET has encouraged colleges to build on their existing provision for unemployed adults with special needs. Under ET a Training Manager has to accept any trainee sent by the Training Agent; there is no right of selection.

The colleges interviewed have all made significant progress towards attracting specific groups and providing some or all of the following:

- extra help with literacy and numeracy
- sheltered work experience through multi-skill workshops, community-based projects and local sympathetic employers
- initial training and/or foundation training
- child care
- facilities for the disabled

- language support - relevant teaching materials
- guidance and counselling - formal and informal

It is very expensive to offer this sort of quality provision, which in many cases cannot be offset by income from employers. The cuts in supplementary grant put these services at risk and colleges should ensure that negotiations with their local TEC make clear the importance of maintaining the sort of funding to offer a quality scheme, especially for the long-term unemployed and returners to the labour market.

Guidance

This is emerging as a vital element of ET because of the nature of the client group and because of the problems which ET poses for them, for example:

- personal, domestic and health problems
- learning difficulties
- work placement problems
- career guidance

Colleges need to address the problem of the amount of time needed to provide appropriate guidance and support to these clients which is far in excess of that usually provided for other students.

Staffing

ET has given colleges the opportunity to take on more staff - often on National Joint Council (NJC) or administrative, professional, technical and clerical grades (APT&C) conditions of service and with a valuable range of experience - to support the lecturing staff, with the consequence that:

- ET is largely being run by very experienced staff with a background of working with unwaged adults;
- ET needs to be managed as part of the college system, not marginalised; it needs the expertise of FE staff to make the best use of all the college facilities and systems in order to enhance the ET provision.

Staff development

Colleges, along with other Training Agents or Managers, are currently implementing the Training Agency's staff development programme 'Quality 6'. Staff competence and its achievement through a staff development programme is a key factor in awarding approved status to Training Agents and Training Managers. The TA programme sets out a complete framework for staff development by:

- working out the staff development needs of the organisation as a whole;
- identifying the existing competences of individual staff and the competences to be developed;
- planning and carrying out the training necessary to meet these needs in conjunction with the Accredited Training Centre;
- arranging for the assessment, recording and certification of the competences of staff to meet their responsibilities - again in conjunction with the Accredited Training Centre.

The programme has two major elements:

- the standards for judging the competence of individual staff members;
- the stages of the staff development programme which result in fully competent individual staff members.

Standards

These are based on key areas of work in Employment Training:

- the induction and initial assessment of trainees
- the design of programmes for trainees
- communications and links between Training Agents and Training Managers
- the management of the action plan, including review of progress, recording of achievement, vocational qualifications
- the delivery of training programmes

These key areas are divided into units of competence which are sub-divided into elements, each of which has one or more performance criteria. Units 1-9 cover Training Agents' staff and units 10-26 cover Training Managers' staff. The units do not cover administrative/clerical staff because NVQs are more suitable.

Stages

The staff development programme is built around five stages:

1. Defining responsibilities in the organisation
2. Individual action planning - provisional assessment of prior learning will take place at this stage with formal accreditation later
3. Planning of staff development and completion of action plans
4. Delivery of staff development and review of progress
5. Assessing, recording and certificating competence

Implementation

Because of the speed with which this programme has had to be put into operation, it would appear that some college ET sections are carrying out the programme outside the college staff development structure. This puts extra pressure on the ET staff, many of whom feel the programme is valuable for those who deal with ET trainees, even though college staff may already be teacher trained. Many of the units could also be of value to staff in the college who may not be heavily involved in ET. Where the programme seems to be working best is where it has been taken on board by

the college as a whole and does not take place in isolation.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

1. Details have now been released of substantial cuts in the ET funding for 1990/91.

This is a severe setback for many schemes, particularly colleges, who increasingly provide for client groups who are in some way disadvantaged. With falling unemployment, more schemes have increasing numbers of those trainees who cannot easily be placed with employers. Consequently there is no financial contribution to the scheme, and the training provided - extra help with literacy, numeracy, social and communication difficulties as well as long periods of vocational training - needs to be adequately resourced.

The TA expects the TECs to provide for those who do not attract money from other sources and has listed disadvantaged groups who are eligible (see above) yet has cut back on the funding which helped these groups.

Many TEC board members are concerned that these cuts have been made even before they have had the opportunity to take on the management of the schemes. Some Training Managers now feel that they cannot continue to provide the sort of quality provision which these trainees need and are considering withdrawing from ET altogether.

2. Colleges can learn valuable lessons from ET in areas of development which are now affecting all learning programmes:

- individual action planning
- accreditation of prior achievement
- National Vocational Qualifications
- work-based learning
- flexible and individualised learning programmes
- guidance and review procedures
- recording of progress and achievement

Staff involved in Employment Training and Youth Training (formerly YTS) are often found to be spearheading these developments in isolation and yet the expertise they have could be used in implementing them in mainstream FE.

3. TECs need to be made aware of how further education colleges are responding flexibly to local employment needs through quality ET initiatives such as those described in the case studies and which include:

- customised training programmes for local employers
- assessment and testing services for industry
- modular rolling programmes leading to NVQs
- provision for clients with special needs

As Employment Training Programmes will be just one of the responsibilities of TECs, there will be no further separate ET bulletins. Instead, FEU publications will cover the range of issues which will arise from the relationship between Training and Enterprise Councils and further education colleges.

Thanks to staff at the ET schemes mentioned for their help in preparing this bulletin and also to East Warwickshire College; Otley College of Agriculture and Horticulture; Suffolk Employment Training; West Midlands Advisory Council; Training Agency.

If you have any comments on this bulletin or related issues, please contact Sue Rawlinson at the Further Education Unit, 2 Orange Street, London WC2H 7WE (telephone 071-321 0433). For details of the availability of further copies of this bulletin and other FEU publications, please contact the FEU Information Centre at the same address.

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